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6 December 1958

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CENTRAL

INTELLIGENCE

BULLETIN



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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

6 December 1958

DAILY BRIEF

I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

OK
USSR-Guinea: The two-man Soviet delegation which arrived in Guinea earlier this week can be expected to offer assistance on economic problems and to press for an early exchange of diplomatic representatives. Premier Toure is likely to be receptive to such Soviet proposals, especially as he is anxious to hasten the establishment of major Western missions in Conakry. Ghana and Liberia may then find it necessary to implement their earlier decisions in principle to accept Soviet representation.

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

OK
Israel-Syria: The Israelis apparently regard the 3 December border clash with Syria as one of the most serious since 1948. The incident, which in Israeli minds amply justifies "retaliation" against Syria, follows a period during which Israeli officers have spoken more openly of the need for "action" regarding the border situation. Although Israel has submitted a formal complaint on the incident to the UN Security Council, it would not necessarily wait for UN action before taking steps of its own.

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OK
Tunisia-France: The jamming recently undertaken by the French military in Algeria against Radio Tunis, is so effective that its broadcasts are barely audible in southern Tunisia. Elimination of Radio Tunis, which is one of the few stations normally heard there at night, leaves Radio Cairo without a real competitor in an area where Nasir is reported to be promoting anti-Bourguiba activity.

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no
Cyprus-Greece: Greek bitterness toward NATO and particularly the US is mounting following passage of a resolution on Cyprus by the UN General Assembly's Political Committee. With Archbishop Makarios firmly opposed to tripartite talks among Greece, Turkey, and Britain, there is little likelihood that the negotiations called for in the resolution will take place in the near future. On Cyprus, EOKA can be expected to renew its campaign of terrorism as best it can, and Americans may be among the targets.

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III. THE WEST

no
Italy: Premier Fanfani's decision to call for a vote of confidence following two parliamentary defeats is an attempt

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DAILY BRIEF

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to whip into line right-wing Christian Democrats who have repeatedly voted against him on secret ballots. They oppose his socio-economic reform program and deeply resent his authoritarian way of running the party. His chances of winning a confidence vote seem only slightly better than even, and his position will still be precarious because his coalition lacks a parliamentary majority.

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Cuba: The most immediate and serious problem arising from the current increase in revolutionary activities is the threat to the nation's economy particularly to the sugar industry. Business and commerce, which have suffered throughout the island during the two-year-old civil war, are experiencing a marked decline and the government's financial position is deteriorating. The rebels have stepped up their military activities since the 3 November elections.

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NP
Honduras: President Villeda apparently is doing nothing to arrest the crisis which is fast coming to a head. The military are known to be plotting against his administration, and armed members of his own Liberal party have been patrolling the streets of the capital at night. Violence could erupt at any time.

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I. THE COMMUNIST BLOC

Moscow Sends Delegation to Guinea

The arrival in Guinea earlier this week of the first official Soviet visitors reflects increasing Communist attention to that country following Moscow's swift recognition in October. The two-man delegation, which was received by Premier Toure on 5 December, can be expected to press for rapid exchange of diplomatic missions as a means of facilitating possible Soviet assistance on economic problems. A Soviet mission in Guinea would increase pressure on both Ghana and Liberia to implement their earlier decisions in principle to accept Soviet representation.

Premier Toure, a left-wing nationalist who has collaborated with Communists in the past, may well be receptive to such Soviet proposals. He has already signed trade and cultural accords with East Germany and apparently envisages the early conclusion of similar agreements with Czechoslovakia.

Toure may also see in the Soviet visit an opportunity to advance his campaign to hasten the establishment in Conakry of diplomatic missions from major Western countries. France has asked that such action be postponed pending regularization of its own relations with Guinea, and there has been no official Western representative resident there since the withdrawal late last month of the French official assigned to liquidate most of France's responsibilities in Guinea. 25X1

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II. ASIA-AFRICA

Israeli-Syrian Border

The artillery duel on 3 December between Syrian and Israeli forces, which an Israeli official said caused more damage to Israeli property than any Syrian action since the 1948 war, is being used by Tel Aviv to justify its complaint to the UN Security Council and possible "retaliation." An emergency cabinet session, attended by the army chief of staff, was held in Tel Aviv on 4 December; Prime Minister Ben-Gurion subsequently commented in threatening terms concerning the border situation. Tel Aviv radio contends that Cairo has unleashed "an outburst of abuse and invective almost without precedent," including an assertion that Israeli settlements will suffer "even more than in the past."

Key Israeli Defense Force leaders have asserted that sufficient justification for a retaliatory raid existed even prior to the 3 December clash. Israel's complaint to the UN would not necessarily deter direct action by Israeli forces even prior to any UN decision in view of what the Israelis profess to be "failures" of the UN truce mechanism.

The Syrian bombardment of seven Israeli border settlements on 3 December followed an incident on the same day during which Israeli shepherds were fired on, probably because the Syrians thought they were trespassing on Arab lands. The Syrian artillery fire was accurate and might be regarded by Israel as indicative of increased proficiency on the part of the UAR First Army in the use of its new Soviet weapons. Israeli officials have previously suggested that the achievement of such a proficiency would be a turning point in the balance of military power between Israel and the UAR.

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Tunis Blames France for Jamming Broadcasts

The jamming station which is interfering with Arab-language broadcasts of Radio Tunis has been pinpointed at Collo, near Philippeville in eastern Algeria, [redacted]

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[redacted] The French Embassy in Tunis denies that France is responsible, but French military authorities in eastern Algeria may be conducting a local operation to prevent Algerians--and consequently other listeners--from receiving this station. In accordance with Tunisia's policy, its broadcasts support Algerian independence, the National Liberation Front, and the provisional government.

Tunisian Foreign Secretary Mokadem, who accompanied President Bourguiba during the early stages of his three-week trip through the southern provinces, confirms that Radio Tunis' Arab programs are hardly audible in southern Tunisia. Even without interference, however, these broadcasts can be heard only at night in that area. Anti-Bourguiba broadcasts from Cairo, on the other hand, are readily heard throughout the poverty-stricken southern area where the President's prestige is probably the lowest. Mokadem says that the French are doing themselves and the West a disservice by hampering the Tunis government's efforts to give Tunisians in the south a correct version of the UAR's role in the anti-Bourguiba conspiracy. [redacted]

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[redacted]
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Cyprus-Greece

Relations between Greece and most of its allies will be further embittered by the 4 December vote in the Political Committee of the UN General Assembly which favored an Iranian resolution calling for negotiations on the Cyprus issue by the three governments concerned and representatives of the Cypriots. Greek Foreign Minister Averoff has called American support for the Iranian resolution an unneutral act in a dispute among three friends of the United States. In Greece, there will be new pressures on the government to sever its ties with NATO. Iceland was the only NATO member to vote with Greece; Italy abstained, and all other members voted for the resolution.

In the unlikely event that the resolution passes the plenary session of the General Assembly by the required two-thirds vote, there will still be little possibility that a conference can be held in the near future. Archbishop Makarios is believed adamantly opposed, and Greek Government leaders have indicated that no conference is possible unless partition as a final solution is ruled out in advance--a condition not met by the Iranian resolution. Athens and the Greek Cypriot leadership now may concentrate attention on the next British elections in the hope that a Labor party victory would mean a change in British policy toward a Cyprus settlement.

Failure of the Greek appeal at the UN will probably lead to another round of violence on Cyprus. Bitterness over US support of the Iranian resolution could lead to incidents involving American personnel. [Redacted]

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[Redacted]
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[Redacted]
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III. THE WEST

Italian Premier Facing Serious Dissension in His Party

Premier Fanfani's call on 4 December for a vote of confidence is an attempt to whip into line right-wing members of his Christian Democratic party who have shown growing hostility toward him in recent weeks. The immediate point at issue is the government's proposal to retain a four-cent gasoline tax, which has been defeated in two parliamentary votes--314 to 263 and 323 to 239. In these and other recent secret ballots it has been clear that some Christian Democrats were voting against the Fanfani coalition--which, even with the abstention of the six Republican representatives, has only a three-vote margin in the 596-seat chamber.

The deep resentment against Fanfani in the party springs from a number of factors: (1) desire of party "notables" like former Prime Minister Scelba to return to power; (2) widespread irritation over Fanfani's authoritarian methods of running the party; and (3) right-wing dislike of Fanfani's socio-economic reform program and of his alliance with the Social Democratic party. Right-wing party elements further fear that Fanfani's position may be strengthened by the possible parliamentary support of Nenni Socialist deputies after the Nenni Socialists' January congress.

At the same time, in a confidence vote, even right-wing opponents will hesitate to stand up and be counted in open opposition to a prime minister who is a member of their own party. The party's National Council, with the exception of Scelba, voted unanimous confidence in Fanfani last month.

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